



Pomp and Circumstance...

Cari lettori e care lettrici,

As we conclude another year of courses here at The University of Virginia, we would like to take a moment to acknowledge the many accomplishments of our graduates in Italian Studies.

As most readers of our newsletter already know, on 20 March, the university transitioned to remote learning as a precaution against the spread of COVID-19. Unfortunately, this also led to the cancellation of all special events, including Commencement.

We understand that graduating from college is an important milestone in the life of every student. It is also a moment of pride and great happiness for your families. Traditionally, a commencement ceremony is a time to not only celebrate this momentous occasion, but also share one final joyous memory of your undergraduate career with your friends.

So, we are very sorry that your ceremony has been postponed. In its place, we dedicate this special issue of *La Vendemmia* to all of our graduates and their families. We realize that this is not really the type of commencement that you had always envisioned, but we hope that it can still be a fond *ricordino* of your time spent here at The University of Virginia.

-Deborah Parker, Enrico Cesaretti, Sarah Annunziato, Francesca Calamita, Stella Mattioli, and Hiromi Kaneda



*"In Italy, when you graduate from university, the degree that you receive is called *La laurea*. The length of time that it takes to earn a *laurea* may vary based on your course of study. However, anyone who holds this degree can be called *un dottore* or *una dottoressa*."*

-The Editors

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Auguri

After many late nights spent at the library and many tense mornings spent rushing off to your classes, today you will officially graduate from the University of Virginia.

This is a moment that you have all worked tirelessly to achieve, from when you first mailed off your applications to the last paper that you turned in for a course.

It has been my honor to work with you during your time here as undergraduates. I have taken great pride in watching you evolve from the shy first or second year students who came to ask me about becoming a major or minor, to the confident speakers of Italian that you are today.

As you begin this next chapter in your lives, remember what Cesare Pavese once wrote:

«L'unica gioia al mondo è cominciare. È bello vivere perché vivere è cominciare, sempre, ad ogni istante».

Best wishes and congratulations!

- Enrico Cesaretti,

Associate Professor of Italian
and Director of Undergraduate
Program in Italian



Seguite le Vostre Stelle

To our new Bachelors of Arts in Italian Studies, I congratulate you on the successful completion of your studies at the University of Virginia. And I congratulate your parents. I know that the completion of a daughter's or son's undergraduate education is one of life's true milestones, and that it represents as well the culmination of years of care, hope, financial sacrifice, and love. Many of you will take the training and skills you have received into other fields of endeavor. Our undergraduate Italian majors have moved on to professional programs in business, law, politics, or gone onto jobs in the fields of publishing, health care, teaching, foreign service, urban planning and computer technology. Wherever your life takes you, you will find that as a student of literature and culture, you have developed your knowledge of literary history, built skills of analysis and organization, and sharpened your critical intelligence; if we have done our jobs well, you have also been encouraged to cultivate a global sensibility, and an awareness of the value of openness, play, and aesthetic joy.

E, come dice Dante...

Considerate la vostra semenza:

Fatti non foste a viver come brutti,

ma per seguir virtute e canoscenze

Consider well the seed that gave you birth:

You were not made to live your lives as brutes,

but to be followers of worth and knowledge.

- Deborah Parker,

Professor of Italian

Da Ricordare...

Cari Studenti e Care Studentesse,

Congratulazioni per la vostra laurea!

Vorrei condividere con voi le parole di Daisaku Ikeda, uno scrittore, poeta, fotografo giapponese che io rispetto molto:

A pyramid isn't built from the top down. The apex is attained only by laying strong foundation stones, one by one. The same is true of achieving a lofty objective. The crucial thing is to lay the first stone, to take the first step.

Sono convinta che abbiate costruito delle forti fondamenta e dunque non vi aspettate altro che costruire sempre più in alto! In bocca al lupo per tutto!

- Hiromi Kaneda, Lecturer of Italian

Congratulations to all of you. It has been a pleasure and an honor to be your Italian instructor during these years.

I wish you all the best for a bright future, and I am sure that you will be able to make the best of your knowledge of Italian!

- Stella Mattioli,
Lecturer of Italian



Fino al nostro prossimo incontro

You made it! I am very proud of all you for your hard work at the University of Virginia over the last four years. It was a privilege to have you in my classes. I consider myself a very lucky professor because I had the opportunity to discuss so many topics related to gender issues in Italian society and beyond with you. I hope you were able to use what you learned with me in your other courses as well, and above all that you will be able to apply these concepts and ideas to your everyday life after graduation.

As Director of UVA in Siena and Florence, I was thrilled to see you exploring my country and tasting the real Italian life; please, come back! You will always have a home away from home on this side of the world. You are now young ambassadors of Italian culture, literature and cinema and I count on you to make visible inclusive Italian language as well as women's and LGBTQ writing and all forms of visual arts.

Do not forget that empowered women empower women, so lift others while building your career and life, make connections, walk together. I am aware this is not the graduation ceremony you expected at the end of your studies at UVA, however I am also confident that many exciting opportunities are waiting for you and we will be able to celebrate your wonderful achievements in person soon.

Pursue your dreams, travel, open your minds and find a job that fulfills you. There are endless possibilities around the world and the world is waiting for you to help make it a better place. Tanti auguri di cuore!

-Francesca Calamita, Assistant Professor & Director of Study Abroad

Wynne Barsanti

Today we also send our warmest congratulations to Wynne Barsanti (right). Wynne will graduate with a double major in Italian Studies and Cognitive Science.

During her undergraduate years here at UVA, Wynne has definitely taken full advantage of everything that the university offers.

She has been quite active with the musical group Achoostics, as well as a host of other organizations from Madison House to her sorority.

Not only is Wynne about to graduate with two different BA degrees, but she has also recently been elected to Phi Beta Kappa (see page 9)!

We are very proud of Wynne and send her many good wishes for the future.

- Stella Mattioli



Arianna De Corte

Congratulations to Arianna De Corte (left), who graduates today with a BA in Italian Studies and Biology, which is no small feat to accomplish!

Arianna has been speaking Italian from a young age, since her family is originally from the boot-shaped land. In fact, Arianna recalls when, as a child her father would gather the family together and make them all watch classics of Italian cinema, such as *Bicycle Thieves*. Although she could not have realized it at the time, this experience obviously prepared her well for her future college career.

During her years at The University of Virginia, Arianna also took advantage of our various study abroad programs in Italy, where she made a fine impression on the faculty of CET in Siena.

In the near future, Arianna will head to graduate school to continue her studies. Please join us in sending her best wishes and congratulations on her not one, but two degrees.

- Sarah Annunziato

Cait Flippen

Cait Flippen came to UVA as an Italian novice. She began her studies of the language, as so many do, in Italian 1010, and before long, she decided to become a major.

During her time with us, Cait developed a passion for Italian screen culture, and Women's and Gender Studies.

Please join us in congratulating Cait and sending her many *auguri* for whatever her future holds.

- Stella Mattioli



Owen Little

Owen Little began his personal Italian journey in the fall of 2016, when he registered for Elementary Italian I. From that moment on, it only took a short time for Owen to discover his inner Italophile, which led him to declare a major in Italian Studies.

Since that long-ago time, Owen has studied abroad in Siena and completed a number of courses ranging from Advanced Italian language to Italian cinema. He is a friendly and memorable presence wherever he goes.

Along with his frequent sidekick Andrew, (see page 8), Owen delighted his Advanced Italian I class with a very detailed re-enactment of scenes from the heist-movie, *I soliti ignoti (Big Deal on Madonna Street)* and his short stories, which often took the form of comedic *gialli*. He also recently performed in the Virtual Neorealist Short Film Festival, playing the lead role in his group's movie.

Today, Owen will graduate with a double major in Italian Studies and Global Studies. We expect to hear many great things about Owen's future adventures, even if they don't involve any more acting!

- Sarah Annunziato



Emily O'Connor

Emily O'Connor (right) made her first appearance in the Italian Studies Program at UVA in the fall of 2016. At that time, Emily was a newly arrived first-year who had just begun Elementary Italian I.

Although she was an absolute beginner, Emily quickly distinguished herself as one of the most motivated and curious of all the first-year Italian students.

From day one, Emily has always been ready to try anything new.

During her time here as an Italian Studies major, Emily has spent a J-Term falling in love with Tuscany, been a chef during *Dolcissimo*, the annual baking and second language acquisition contest, and taken practically every Italian course available.

Today, Emily is finally graduating with a BA in Italian Studies. She hopes to pursue a career in education.

Please join us in sending her many heartfelt congratulations and *auguri* for the future.

- Sarah Annunziato

Ariana Piacquadio

Ariana Piacquadio (left) began her study of Italian as a first-year student in Elementary Italian I almost four years ago.

Even back then, Ariana was already fascinated by international travel and learning about new cultures. In fact, her entire Elementary Italian class followed her efforts to take a trip to Iceland that year during winter break with great interest.

This obviously would not be the last trip abroad of Ariana's undergraduate career. In the spring of 2019, she spent a semester in Siena working on her language skills and learning all about Italian culture. In fact, Ariana learned so much that she even shared her reflections on the *Hoos Abroad* blog.

Ariana has been a memorable and enthusiastic presence in all of her Italian Studies courses, from that very first beginner-level class four years ago to her most recent Italian cinema course this spring.

This year, Ariana is graduating with a BA in Italian Studies and also, another BA in Global Studies. We expect to hear, or more likely read, about her next travel adventures in the pages of some famous magazine in the not too distant future.

- Sarah Annunziato



Alexandra Loperfito

Alexandra Loperfito has been a member of the Italian Studies Program for some time now. She began her study of Italian during her very first year at The University of Virginia.

Since that time, Alexandra has distinguished herself through her diligence and determination.

During her years at UVA, Alexandra has studied Biology along with Italian. She dedicates a great deal of time to working with Phi Delta Epsilon, the medical fraternity, and volunteering.

Alexandra is also a music lover, who has been known to apply her knowledge in this area to her Italian Studies courses from time to time.

Today she will graduate with a BA in Biology and a minor in Italian Studies. Please join us in congratulating Alexandra!

- Francesca Calamita



Congratulazioni!

Alex Robiolio

Congratulations to Alex Robiolio, who graduates today with a double major in Physics and Computer Science. In all his copious spare time, he also managed to complete a minor in Italian Studies.

Although we don't really know how he found the time to do it, Alex has been a regular presence in all of our courses for years now.

His insightful comments and writings about all things Italian have always added a thoughtful element to every class in which he has been a student. His knowledge of, and passion about film has been especially interesting to see on display over the years.

In fact, Alex has participated in the Mafia Short Film Festival and the Virtual Neorealist Film Festival during his time in the Italian Studies Program.

Please join us in congratulating Alex and sending him best wishes!

- Sarah Annunziato



Italian Studies students at *Dolcissimo 2019*, sponsored by the Italian Studies Program & The Institute for World Languages.

Amici ed Amiche

These students may not have officially completed either a major or a minor in Italian Studies, but they took so many of our courses and participated in so many of our events, that we feel like they might as well have! Please join us in congratulating them as well on their graduation today:

- ◆ Sophie Ericsson
- ◆ Andrew Garcia
- ◆ Ansley Gould
- ◆ Gabi Gramont
- ◆ Brittney Harmond
- ◆ Morgan Ryan
- ◆ Ray Savage
- ◆ Katie Schultz
- ◆ Vinuthna Tirupuranane

- The Editors

A Prize for Emily

We are very excited to announce that Emily O'Connor will receive the Marie M. Giuliano prize for excellence in Italian Studies this year.

The Department of Spanish, Italian and Portuguese confers this award annually to students of either Spanish or Italian who have distinguished themselves throughout their undergraduate careers for their hard work and dedication to the study of their target language and its cultural products.

Emily recently sent us some reflections to share with you on the occasion of her prize:

Since my first year at the university, being part of the department has had such a positive impact on my college experience. What I love most about the department is the relationships you're able to form with the professors and your classmates. In larger departments, there's often very little personal connection available, but that's no issue in the Italian department. My biggest advice would be to get involved however you can. Be a chef at Prof. Calamita's Dolcissimo event, or travel to Florence for Prof. Cesaretti's January Term. By putting yourself out there, you can make the most out of your undergrad experience!

Grazie Emily, e congratulazioni!

- Stella Mattioli



Phi Beta Fabulous!

The Italian Studies Program is also very proud to announce that Wynne Barsanti has been elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

Wynne received this honor just a few weeks ago thanks to her excellent academic record and the depth and breadth of her studies.

Students who win election to Phi Beta Kappa usually participate in an induction ceremony at the end of the year. Unfortunately, in 2020, this event was canceled due to public health concerns.

However, that won't stop us from celebrating Wynne. Please join us, wherever you are, in raising a glass of your favorite beverage to Wynne!

- Deborah Parker



Eccellenti!

Future Pulitzer Prize Winners

Every year, the Italian Studies Program awards the Lola Pelliccia Essay Prize to two students, one from the 1000-2000 level courses, and another from the 3000-4000 level, who have demonstrated excellence in Italian through the written word.

Named after beloved Italian Studies lecturer Lola Pelliccia, the Pelliccia family sponsors the award to honor their mother's memory and encourage the continued study of Italian at The University of Virginia.

This year, the Italian Studies Program was delighted to confer not two, but three prizes! Alyssa Montalbino (left) received the honor for the 1000-2000 level for her essay about the European Union, while Kalista Diamantopoulos (center) and Heather Snowden (right) received awards for the 3000-4000 level.

In a typical year, prize winners receive their award at our annual Garden Party, which traditionally occurs in April. This year, we were unable to celebrate in the usual way, but we expect to hold our party again in the fall so that you can all congratulate Alyssa, Kalista, and Heather in person. However, until then, please join us in sending them virtual best wishes on their essay prizes!

- Hiromi Kaneda

The Department of Spanish, Italian and Portuguese offers two kinds of specialization in Italian Studies: a major in Italian Studies leading to the B.A. or B.A. with distinction; and a minor in Italian Studies.

For information on becoming a major or a minor in Italian Studies, please contact Professor Enrico Cesaretti (efc4p@virginia.edu).



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Alex Robiolio

Heather Snowden

Ringraziamo:

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The Pelliccia Family

Tally Sanford